

Memorandum

To: EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

EAC Meeting: June 5, 2023

From: STATE AGENCIES' EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

Reference Number: Tab 7, Information

Prepared By: C. Sequoia Erasmus
Associate Deputy Director,
California Transportation Commission

Published Date: May 26, 2023

Subject: Interagency Updates

Summary:

The purpose of the interagency Equity Advisory Committee (EAC) is to elevate diverse and historically marginalized voices to advise the California Transportation Commission (Commission), the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) on how to achieve meaningful outcomes in transportation equity, environmental justice, and equitable economic opportunities, especially as related to transportation planning and programming.

EAC members, Commission staff, and the CalSTA Undersecretary will report on activities conducted throughout the months of April and May 2023. The EAC will hear updates from Commission staff including Matthew Yosgott, Deputy Director of Senate Bill (SB) 1 Programming, Rebecca Light, Assistant Deputy Director of the Local Transportation Climate Adaptation Program (LTCAP), and Kacey Ruggiero, Associate Deputy Director of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Mark Tollefson, Undersecretary for CalSTA will provide updates on CalSTA initiatives including the Port and Freight Infrastructure Program funding workshop. Additionally, Brigitte Driller, Associate Deputy Director of Transportation Planning at the Commission will notify the EAC of upcoming opportunities to provide input into the Regional Transportation Plan guidelines update. Carolyn Abrams, Acting Race and Equity Program Manager for Caltrans will notify the EAC of upcoming opportunities to advise the agencies on next steps for implementing recommendations from the 2022 Statewide Equity Listening Sessions. Carolyn Abrams will also notify the EAC of the opportunity to inform the implementation of the Caltrans Equity Index, including the development and review of use cases for project prioritization, planning, and analysis.

Background:

Since holding its first Executive Meeting on March 21, 2023, EAC members have collaborated on several initiatives to support the goals of the adopted scope. Throughout the months of April and May 2023, EAC members participated in the following activities:

1. Evaluated the Equity Criteria section of SB 1 Competitive Funding Program applications
 - The Commission oversees several SB 1 Funding Programs
 - In 2022, with help from the Commission's Equity Advisory Roundtable, the Commission developed and adopted a new Transportation Equity Supplement for the competitive SB 1 funding programs that included equity specific criteria for evaluation.
 - That section can be found in the following link: <https://catc.ca.gov/-/media/ctc-media/documents/programs/senate-bill-1/2022-sb1-competitive-programs-transportation-equity-supplement-a11y.pdf>
 - For more information on SB 1 competitive programs, please visit the following link: <https://catc.ca.gov/programs/sb1>
2. Participated in a workshop to review and offer feedback and suggestions to language in the draft Local Transportation Climate Adaptation Program (LTCAP) guidelines
 - The Commission is responsible for the development and administration of the new LTCAP.
 - Created by SB 198 in June 2022, LTCAP will provide a total of \$400.5 million in federal Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) funding as well as a one-time appropriation of state funding. This funding is intended to support the development and implementation of projects that adapt local transportation infrastructure to the effects of climate change, improve transportation and community resiliency to natural hazards or disasters, and advance environmental justice by requiring applicants demonstrate that nominated projects directly benefit climate-vulnerable and under-resourced communities.
 - For more information on the LTCAP, please visit the following link: <https://catc.ca.gov/programs/local-transportation-climate-adaptation-program>
3. Participated in a workshop to review and offer feedback and suggestions to language in the draft Community Engagement section of the Draft 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) guidelines
 - The Commission adopts and manages the STIP.
 - The STIP is a formula program where 75 percent of the funds are designated to the regions through the regional transportation planning agencies and 25 percent to the state through Caltrans. The STIP is updated and adopted every even numbered year.
 - The STIP is a capital improvement program that provides state funding for improvements to active transportation, intercity rail and transit, local roads, and the state highway system. By law, the STIP cannot fund transit operations.
 - More information on the STIP may be found at: <https://catc.ca.gov/programs/state-transportation-improvement-program>

4. Attended a briefing to learn about the forthcoming announcement of funding awards for the Port and Freight Infrastructure Program (PFIP)
 - CalSTA oversees the PFIP program
 - The 2022-23 state budget includes \$1.2 billion for a one-time PFIP to help ease supply chain congestion and increase the capacity to move goods in California. The program seeks to improve the capacity, safety, efficiency and resilience of goods movement to, from and through California's maritime ports, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions and harmful impacts to communities adjacent to the corridors and facilities used for goods movement. PFIP applicants were asked to describe how their projects "promote transportation equity and environmental justice", among other areas of consideration.
 - For more information visit <https://calsta.ca.gov/subject-areas/freight-rail-border>

Future Opportunities for EAC Collaboration

1. Provide feedback into the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Guidelines.
 - Commission Staff is working in collaboration with Caltrans to update the RTP Guidelines for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs).
 - The RTP Guidelines set forth a statewide, long-range regional transportation planning framework; promote an integrated, multimodal planning process; and facilitate the efficient delivery of transportation projects that meet local, regional, and state goals. The first draft of the RTP Guidelines for MPOs was released for a 30-day public comment on May 5, 2023. Staff anticipates presenting a second draft of the RTP Guidelines for MPOs and a first draft of the RTP Guidelines for RTPAs to the Commission in the fall. Staff will provide an update at the June 5, 2023, EAC meeting on upcoming opportunities for engagement.
 - For more information, visit: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/transportation-planning/division-of-transportation-planning/regional-and-community-planning/2023-rtp-guidelines-update>
2. Advise Caltrans, the Commission, and CalSTA on next steps to address the findings and recommendations from the 2022 Statewide Equity Listening Sessions.
 - In 2022, Caltrans, the Commission, and CalSTA held a series of Statewide Equity Listening Sessions in six California communities. The sessions were an early step in a series of planned actions and investments by the transportation agencies to improve policies and practices to better reflect principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The sessions had three goals:
 - i. Establish communication and build trust with partners, communities, and local leaders.
 - ii. Understand how transportation and transportation policies have impacted individuals and communities, and identify current opportunities, needs, and challenges related to California's transportation system.
 - iii. Document the findings to support and guide the transportation agencies in developing actionable steps to transform policies and procedures.

- The final report, featuring findings and recommendations from the sessions, has been released. The report is intended to guide each agency in its efforts to further enhance organizational structures around equity, as well as build relationships that will inform how state transportation agencies can improve engagement with communities statewide. Further actions to address the report findings and a strategy for expanding engagement opportunities will be developed in coordination with staff from Caltrans, the Commission, and CalSTA. The transportation agencies would like to engage the EAC in this process.
3. Inform the implementation of the Caltrans Transportation Equity Index (EQI), including the development and review of use cases for project prioritization, planning, and analysis.
- To operationalize Caltrans' commitments to equity, the department is developing the Caltrans EQI. The EQI is a screening and evaluation tool that utilizes transportation-specific and socioeconomic indicators to identify transportation-based priority populations at the Census block level. Caltrans aims to utilize this tool to inform how Caltrans can address and mitigate inequities exacerbated by the transportation system.
 - Broadly speaking, Caltrans is exploring how the EQI can:
 - i. Capture transportation-specific and socioeconomic indicators that can be used to advance equitable outcomes for our transportation system.
 - ii. Identify transportation-based priority populations with a data driven-approach.
 - iii. Support the development of guidance to improve our analysis of project impacts and improve project planning, development, and design.
 - The EQI will also be a useful tool beyond Caltrans, with the idea that other transportation agencies and community partners can use this tool in their planning and decision-making processes.
 - The tool is currently in beta version and Caltrans will accept comments and feedback until June 25, 2023. Caltrans plans to release the 1.0 version of the tool in mid-2023 and then focus on the development of use cases beginning this summer and continuing with a review process into next year. Caltrans would like to share the current version of the EQI with the EAC for feedback, followed by close collaboration on the development and review of use cases. The EAC would be critical in providing guidance to Caltrans to help ensure equitable and meaningful implementation of the tool. For more information and to explore the beta EQI, visit: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/planning-modal/race-equity/eqi>
4. Announcement: Reconnecting Communities: Highways to Boulevards (RC:H2B) Pilot Program call for applications and application workshops
- In response to the adoption of Streets & Highways Code 104.3, Caltrans is launching the Reconnecting Communities: Highways to Boulevards (RC:H2B) Pilot Program.
 - The call for applications and application workshops will be held throughout summer 2023.

- \$149 million was established in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 State Budget to plan for and fund the conversion of key underutilized highways in the State into multi-modal corridors to reconnect underserved communities divided by transportation infrastructure.
- These legacy impacts will be addressed through community-based transportation planning, design, demolition, and/or reconstruction of city streets, parks, or other infrastructure.